

COMMUNITY PREPARATION FOR RESETTLEMENT
of
JAPANESE AMERICANS



The Total Evacuation

For the first time in American history the Government evacuated all members of one racial group from their places of permanent settlement to designated and confined areas for reasons of military necessity. 104,000 persons, two-thirds of whom are American citizens of Japanese ancestry, have been assigned to ten relocation centers by the West Coast Military Command. The total evacuation has been accomplished. No further protest or objection will restore to these people their original homes and stores and farms, at least for the duration. There is, however, one thing that you can do. That is, you can help the Government and the evacuees by supporting the plan for dispersal resettlement.

Dispersal Resettlement

In a letter to the Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans, Mr. Dillon S. Myer, Director of the War Relocation Authority, writes:

"The W.R.A. has recently adopted regulations which should enable all of the evacuees who are qualified and care to do so to leave the Relocation Centers. These regulations were discussed with the War Department and the Department of Justice and have the approval of these Departments. These new regulations and the program of outside employment are meeting with the approval and receiving the assistance of other agencies of the Federal Government."

One might ask, if Japanese Americans were put in those centers by the Government, why should the same Government want to release them? The answer to that is simple. Since all the Japanese have been cleared from the Military zone, the military necessity under which the evacuation was accomplished does not now exist. But the Government alone cannot resettle them, except in congregated or isolated groups, which is undesirable. It is, therefore, calling upon organizations and individuals to provide employment and residence outside the relocation centers for the evacuees, so that they may once again find themselves in communities where they may pursue normal patterns of life and receive the benefits of and contribute to Democracy which is a principle of our national existence and for the defense of which we are engaged in this conflict. Christians have a special responsibility in this program. Action, as well as discussion, is the order of the hour. Will you do your part?

Suggestions for Action

1. There is a shortage of labor everywhere. You or someone you know may need extra help. Japanese Americans represent a cross section of all American skills - farmers, laborers, engineers, mechanics, stenographers, typists, doctors, nurses, social workers, and all other professions. The skill of the Japanese people as farmers is especially well known. There are many college graduates among all categories. So, find a job and write to us. Ask for an employer's questionnaire and "Resettlement Hand Book."
2. The standard wage in your community must be assured. This is a protection not only for the evacuees but really for the employer and the community, because otherwise the newcomer will be accused of lowering the living standard and we shall start all over again the unfortunate situation of labor discrimination that existed on the West Coast when the anti-Japanese labor sentiment was at its height.

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3. Placement. Try and fit the job to the skill of the evacuee. Although many of the evacuees indicate that they will do any kind of work to get out of the camps, it will be unwise to offer a capable secretary employment as a domestic or a physicist, whose knowledge is greatly needed these days, a position as a porter or houseman. For the happiness of the evacuee and the satisfaction of the employer, as well as the urgent need for competent man-power during the present emergency, it is essential that job offers be filled with people qualified for the particular work offered. There will be exceptions, of course, but we should be guided by the fitness of the evacuee for the job.
4. The community must be prepared. If your community is not large, you can easily discover the possible reaction of your neighbors toward taking an evacuee. The Government wants to be sure that the resettlement will not disturb the peace and security of the community to which an evacuee is going. Employment must not be offered until you are reasonably sure of this. Of course, there should be no reason for fear of any kind. The Japanese American is an American citizen just as you are. All Americans are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. We do not show discrimination toward citizens of German or Italian descent. Let us be guided by the American spirit of fair play. Besides, these Americans of Japanese descent who come out of the centers do so only after a complete investigation by the War Relocation Authority and a check with the records of the F.B.I. This step is taken for your protection as well as that of the evacuee. Your community should welcome an evacuee from this standpoint. More precise steps regarding this matter are suggested in the "Hand-Book".
5. Find a home. Housing is often a more difficult problem. When you find a job, will you also investigate where an evacuee family might live temporarily. Preliminary housing facilities for single persons may be arranged through the facilities of the Y.M.C.A. or the Y.W.C.A. where such are available. The preferred procedure is for the head of the family to come out first and prepare the place for his family. It goes without saying that a friendly home is the ideal solution, if one can be found.
6. Christian Action. The whole problem is a challenge to the church to rise above hysteria and hatred and to assume the lead in the struggle for a Christian and Democratic America, and to demonstrate Christ's teaching that all men are brothers. Every agency in the church can participate in the resettlement program. The Ladies' Aid might undertake to find suitable housing. The Business and Professional Women's Club and the Men's Club are in a position to learn of job openings and through discussion of the facts involved can do much to allay local fears and prejudices. The young people of the church should be prepared to include the evacuees in their activities and fellowship. All can help to demonstrate that Christianity transcends war and prejudice; that it is a way of life.
7. Organization. If your community is large, it will be best if a committee is organized to explore the possibilities and to make this a community project. Invite ministers, local civic leaders, social workers, Y.M. and Y.W. Secretaries to sit on the committee. There is probably one already established in your city. Consult us if you are in doubt.
8. Functions of organized efforts as well as the nature of any such organization will vary according to each community situation, but the main tasks may be stated as follows:
1. Finding employment
 2. Placement. (Fitting the job to the skills of the evacuees.)

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- 3 -

3. Record keeping (including correspondence and national organizations cooperating)
4. Housing
5. Follow-up for social adjustment
6. Emergency care
7. Public relations (locally)
8. Christian Fellowship

In the planning of a local committee through which the churches may assist in the resettlement program of the W.R.A. a central office or agency is desirable. The office of the council of churches will normally wish to function for the churches in rendering this service. Adequate secretarial help will be necessary to discharge those services which local organizations will be called upon to render to the evacuees, the Government and the local committee members and organizations.

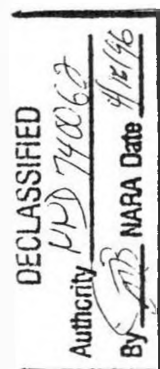
Although skill is required at every point, special attention should be given to the need of a sound setup for placement and social follow-up. The Social Service Department of a city council of churches and staff members of Councils of Social Agencies represent latent resources here. The responsibility for placement and social follow-up should rest in a designated office, which should be supervised by a worker who knows good standards of placement and of following through on social adjustment.

It is desirable to avoid any widespread publicity lest, by misinformation about the doubtful loyalty of the evacuees, their dual citizenship and allegiance to the Emperor of Japan, etc., ill-advised persons cause undue difficulty before the work is under way. The job of a public relations person is to spread the idea on a personal basis among understanding individuals. Discussions in small church groups will be helpful. A large public meeting is apt to produce prejudice.

9. Talking Points. If you need informative reinforcements besides the fact that resettlement is one great Christian and Democratic challenge, we suggest the following to support the justice of our resettlement efforts:

1. Two thirds of the evacuees of the total 104,000 in relocation centers are American citizens - fellow American citizens!
2. Their brothers, husbands, sweethearts, are in the United States Army, Navy, and Marine Corps fighting the war. There are over 5,000 wearing American uniforms.
3. The loyalty of Japanese Americans to the United States is unquestioned. This is not propaganda. The majority of them when the order for evacuation was announced said in a true patriotic spirit that they would take it and bear it as their duty and sacrifice for the cause of their country. We doubt if any other racial group would have taken such tremendous physical and mental discomfort as gracefully as did these citizens.
4. The Tolan Committee's report on National Defense Migration, May 1942, states: "It has become clear that a curtailment of the rights and privileges of the American-born Japanese citizens of this country will furnish one of the gravest crises in the Nation's history, the preservation of liberties will depend upon the degree to which clear vision is applied to momentary difficulties. Realism must go hand in hand with a profound sense of responsibility for the maintenance of our way of life."

"Emergency measures must not be permitted to alter permanently those fundamental principles upon which this Nation was built.



- 4 -

"To many citizens of alien parentage in this country it has come as a profound shock that almost overnight thousands of persons have discovered that their citizenship no longer stands between them and the treatment accorded to any enemy alien within our borders in time of war.

5. Among the letters and affidavits quoted in the Tolan Report (Fourth Interim Report, pp. 48-58) are found the following quotations:
 - a) "The War Department has received no information of sabotage committed by Japanese during the attack on Pearl Harbor." (Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, March 30,)
 - b) "Mr. John Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has advised me there was no sabotage committed there (in Hawaii) prior to December 7, on December 7, or subsequent to that time." (James Rowe, Jr., The Assistant to the Attorney General, written April 20.)
 - c) "...There were no acts of sabotage committed in the City and County of Honolulu December 7, nor have there been acts of sabotage reported to the Police Department since that date." (Honolulu Chief of Police Gabrielson.)
6. The criminal record of Japanese on the West Coast is the lowest of any racial group.
7. They have generously contributed to community philanthropic enterprises and to National Defense Bond sales. Public relief among Japanese has been practically nil.
8. The intellectual and educational standards of the Japanese Americans are among the highest of any racial unit in the country. Their Americanization has been more complete than most of us realize. They speak English fluently, and Japanese a little - if at all.
9. Japanese Americans who are released from the centers have generally been educated in our American schools. They have been raised according to American standards; they act and think as Americans.
10. The great concern of most of us now is that the long inactivity of these desirable people will reduce their skills, and that forced segregation from normal American life will have an un-American and un-Christian influence upon them. Moreover, if they are confined in camps for the duration of the war, their resettlement after the war - when competition and reaction will rise - will be extremely difficult, if not impossible.
11. The Government is already overtaxed with the care of the evacuees. The cooperation of our citizens will relieve the Government materially and present a humane solution of the problems of individuals who are deprived of their citizenship rights temporarily. Here is, indeed, a concrete Christian enterprise that is at the same time democratic and in the best sense of the term, American.

For other material, bibliography, "Resettlement Hand-Book", etc., write to

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